5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11
Bantu Kavirondo FL4

B 791 773

that she left and went on to the Shekwi people in Nyole, where the great grandfather of Mgahanya married her, and she taught him all the secrets of the art of rain-making. The following is the genealogy of the family of rain-making chiefs:—

Agine or Ashue (married the witch).
|
Luchiri.
|
Namonwa.
|
Mgahanya.

The Cult of the "MKIA."

L B 291 171

As is well known, the dress of the female sex in Kavirondo is probably the most scanty in the world. Such as it is, perhaps its most distinctive feature is the tail, or "*mkia*," as it is termed by the Swahilis. This is common to both the Nilotic and Bantu races; among the former its name is "*chieno*," and among the latter "*liroya*." The tail is made of fibre, usually obtained from an aloe called "*tuoro*." Among the Nilotic tribes it is stiff, and fairly short, rather like a bottle-brush, from six to eight inches in length. It is usually ornamented at the top by a few small white beads, or half-a-dozen cowries, and is of the natural colour of the fibre. Among the Bantu Kavirondo it is much thinner, and is, moreover, about twelve inches in length, dyed black, and very pliant.

Finding this peculiar attire among two such different races, one cannot help thinking that it was invented by one and copied by the other, and, if anything, I incline to the view that it was introduced by the Ja-Luo, and copied by the Bantu tribes. The Lur people to the west of Lake Albert, who are very closely allied, both in speech and name, to the Ja-Luo, wear it. The Wamia people on the west side of Elgon, who are also of Nilotic extraction, wear a more elaborate and highly developed form, while many of the women belonging to tribes in the Nile Valley wear a kilt of numerous narrow strips of leather, which, one would imagine, might be fined down to the tail behind, and to the little fringe, often worn in front.

L B 291 484 576

There is an interesting ceremonial connected with this article of dress.

The "*mkia*" is the special mark of the married woman; if, however, a young girl is going on a visit to another village, she can wear one on her journey, but must take it off directly she reaches her destination, and not don it again till she leaves. This is done as a sort of artificial protective mimicry; by wearing the tail she is taken for a married woman, and is not likely to be molested by anyone she may meet on the way.

L B 291 783

If a woman who has borne a child runs out of her house in a hurry—say, because she has been beaten—and goes into another house without the tail, the house she enters is considered unclean, and the husband has to give a goat, which